

## Community resources

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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 03VATICAN5164, HAITI: HOLY SEE WORRIED ABOUT VIOLENCE, SEEKS

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cable's unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#03VATICAN5164**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">03VATICAN5164</a>	<a href="#">2003-11-14 14:19</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Vatican</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.haiti-liberte.com/archives/volume5-1/Campagne%20des%20E.U..asp>  
<http://www.haiti-liberte.com/archives/volume5-2/WikiLeaked%20Cables%20Reveal%20Obsessive.asp>  
<http://www.haiti-liberte.com/archives/volume5-2/Campagne%20des%20E.U..asp>

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L VATICAN 005164

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE LEVIN; WHA/CAR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/13/2013

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [VT](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI: HOLY SEE WORRIED ABOUT VIOLENCE, SEEKS  
BALANCE AMIDST DIVIDED CHURCH

REF: A. A) PORT AU PRINCE 2208

[1](#)B. B) PORT AU PRINCE 2249

[1](#)C. C) PORT AU PRINCE 2188

[1](#)D. D) PORT AU PRINCE 2344

[1](#)E. E) PORT AU PRINCE 2345

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Brent Hardt for reason 1.5 (b) and (d)

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Summary

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[1](#)1. (C) Vatican MFA Caribbean Affairs Office Director Giorgio Lingua said November 7 that the Holy See is "very worried" about the situation in Haiti. He expressed concern about the disruption of an October 16 mass (ref a and b), and noted the potential for violence in the coming weeks (ref d). Acting Foreign Minister Pietro Parolin emphasized in a November 13 meeting the difficult balancing act that Vatican and Episcopal leadership in Haiti must perform in pressing for reform while avoiding instigating further violence. He noted in this regard that the Haitian Episcopal Conference had signed on to the protest letter to the Haitian Government sent by the papal nuncio after the October 16 disturbance (ref b). According to Lingua, the Haitian Catholic Church is struggling in general, with many people leaving the Church due to disillusionment with its handling of the Aristide crisis. Though he acknowledged the challenges Aristide presented to those seeking reform, Lingua thought that

pressure for increased democratic expression might be effective if it did not threaten Aristide's legitimacy. End summary.

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The Vatican's Concern  
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12. (C) MFA Caribbean Affairs Office Director Giorgio Lingua told poloff November 7 that the Holy See is "very worried" about the situation in Haiti, following the disruption of the October 16 papal anniversary mass (ref a, b) and continuing violent incidents. Lingua told us a Haitian MFA representative had called Papal Nuncio Luigi Bonazzi to express his regret for the incident at mass, but said that to his knowledge Aristide himself had not contacted any Vatican representative to comment on the incident. Lingua expressed some satisfaction with news that Aristide had spoken to opposition leader Evans Paul after the incident, as the post-mass mugging of Evans Paul was also troubling to the Vatican. The Holy See remains concerned about the potential for more violence in the lead-up to the bicentennial anniversary of the Battle of Vertieres on November 18 (ref d).

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A Church Balancing, Divided  
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13. (C) According to Lingua, Aristide's exploitation of some clergy members for propaganda purposes was taking its toll on the Haitian population. Lingua said Haitians see "a Church divided," with some clergy supporting the Lavalas party and others against it. Lingua claimed this lack of solidarity fostered disillusionment to the point where people were leaving the Church in increasing numbers.

14. (C) When asked if the October 16 incident might prompt the Holy See to raise its voice more forcefully against Aristide's abuses, Lingua was noncommittal, saying the Vatican needed to balance pressure on Aristide against a delicate security situation on the ground. Similarly, he said the Haitian bishops needed to tread lightly, as Aristide's unpredictable nature made such expression

dangerous. Holy See Acting Foreign Minister Pietro Parolin reiterated this point in a November 13 meeting with the Charge, while also noting that the bishops had signed on to Nuncio Bonazzi's protest letter to the GOH. According to Lingua, the bishops "realize they should speak louder," but have to pick their spots carefully.

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Episcopal Leadership  
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15. (C) Lingua told us the newly-appointed archbishop of Cap Haitien, Hubert Constant, was similarly in a difficult position. Lingua said (protect) Constant had a "good spirit and pastoral character, but is conditioned by the presence -- in fact the omnipresence -- of Aristide." Deputy FM Parolin was somewhat more positive on Constant, noting his role in protesting the October 16 incident. On leadership in Port-au-Prince, Parolin confirmed that Coadjutor Bishop Serge Miot would succeed Archbishop Ligonde as head of the archdiocese when Archbishop Ligonde retires formally. He also denied that Miot was too close to the Aristide camp, asserting that Miot, too, had played a role the post-October 16 protest.

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Comment: Where to go?  
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16. (C) Despite Lingua's rather somber assessment of the situation, he said the Holy See believes there are some glimmers of hope for progress Haiti. He said the Vatican had noticed signs of increased discontent within the Lavalas party that could contribute to prospects for future reform. The best bet, he believed, was for further international pressure, especially from the United States, for increased democratic expression within the country -- without directly challenging Aristide's legitimacy. This tracks with the conservative approach we have seen from the Holy See in such situations. The Vatican is far more likely to take the long-term view than to invite confrontation -- or encourage local bishops to do so.

17. (C) When looking at the big picture, Lingua said, effecting change in Haiti should be easier than in Cuba. Unlike Castro, Lingua observed, Aristide is not ideologically motivated. "This is one person -- not a system," he added. Citing the effects on the U.S. of Haitian drug trafficking and illegal immigration, Lingua acknowledged the USG interest in Haiti, even beyond its humanitarian concerns. Lingua noted with interest the arrival of Ambassador Foley in

Port-au-Prince; consequently we passed him a copy of the  
Ambassador's ref E press statement.

HARDT